

THE DIDACHE

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The opponents to the existence of Jesus assert that the only evidence for His existence is in the Gospels in the New Testament and further claim that they were written by supporters of Jesus and are therefore biased and cannot be trusted.

That is completely untrue.

There are other writings, which are not the work of Christians, which testify that Jesus was a real man, that He was crucified and put to death. This is secular evidence which evidence includes proof of the resurrection, but the evidence of this event is dismissed as unscientific, impossible and, therefore untrue.

People ignore the written Roman records which testifies to the resurrection and explains why the Romans wanted all Christians to be killed so as to eliminate the testimony of all eye witnesses to the death and the resurrection of Christ. However strange this is when you consider they recorded evidence of His death and resurrection. You will remember a similar event at the birth of Christ when all male children under the age of two had to be slaughtered. The evil to destroy Christ and His followers still exists today and this evil is increasing.

There is other evidence, which supports the existence of Jesus, such as the Didache and reveals how Christians lived and behaved a matter of a few years after the resurrection. It was probably written in the time of the apostle Paul but its style is not really like that of Paul or any of the other disciples and therefore must be regarded as an independent.

The meaning of the work Didache has its origin in training and behaviour. Scholars point out that it sets out the teachings of Jesus for new Christians including Jews who have been converted to Christianity. It also sets out training for Christians who want to be evangelists, missionaries and leaders.

It teaches that the only means of baptism is by immersion for adults upon their personal confession of faith. This is born out in the New Testament where baptism was for adults only and by immersion since water baptism is likened to a burial. The Didache teaches the need for daily prayer and the weekly communion service, the breaking of bread service. It teaches the value of work, the sharing of resources, the peaceful attitude towards all people and to treat all people well and to promote the well-being of all. It also deals with the correction of human failings and how to deal with backsliders and those who fall into error which includes the sad disciplining of members who have seriously erred including, as a last resort, their being dismissed. It also highlights the second coming of Christ.

As a work, the Didache is well compiled and organised in a clear fashion. It is not a haphazard collage.

Scholars, including non-Christians, have come to the universal conclusion that the Didache was, most likely, written without any knowledge of the four Gospels.

The actual teaching in the Didache is the same as the teaching of Christ in the gospels and no decent person of our time would object to these Didache writings.

Here are some extracts from the Didache:

There are two ways, the way of life and the way of death.

The way to live is to love God (the non-believer will object to that) and to love your neighbour as yourself (again some will object to this, but love in this content is respect)

Speak well of those who speak badly of you (that is sometimes hard to do, but if you think about it, it makes sense. The tongue can be a deadly weapon and it is said that many people dig their own graves with their tongue).

Turn the other cheek. (How difficult this is, but retaliation and revenge cannot be right. It makes us stoop to the low level of the initial offender.)

Be willing to help any one. Go the extra mile.

If you give someone a gift don't ask for it back.

There then follows instructions clearly based on the original Decalogue.

You shall not murder.

You will not commit adultery/ fornication.

You will not corrupt boys.

You will not have illicit sex.

You will not steal.

You will not practise magic.

You will not make potions.

You will not have an abortion, for that is the murder of a child.

You will not kill your child after it is born.

You will not desire things that belong to your neighbour or anyone else.

You shall not swear falsely.

You shall not give false witness.

You will not speak badly of anyone (slander, defamation of character and libel are wrong).

You will not hold grudges (hatred in your heart adversely affects you.)

You will not be double-minded or double-tongued.

You will not be covetous.

You will not be greedy.

You will not be a hypocrite, an actor or false.

You will not be bad-mannered.

You will not be proud.

You will not hate anyone, although some you will have to reprove.

You will pray for all manner of men.

More common sense follows:

Stay away from all evil. Do not become angry or hot-headed since anger can lead to trouble possibly murder. Do not allow yourself to be lustful for that could lead to illicit sex, adultery, fornication, broken marriages and dysfunctional families.

Magic is ruled out as evil (including astrology, horoscopes, witchcraft, spiritualism etc.)

Grumbling is unhelpful and on no account must you be self-pleasing in the sense of being proud.

Be kind, gentle, patient, merciful and calm.

Do not exalt yourself. You must not be proud, but humble and self-effacing. You will accept the things that happen to you and not become bitter, although reconciliation is advocated.

You must not cause dissension and where there is a division both parties must seek and achieve a reconciliation.

You will do good to anyone as you are able.

On no account are you to be a hypocrite or do anything that is not pleasing to the Lord Jesus.

This is further proof the existence of the followers of Jesus. This teaching is the same as that of Jesus as set out in the Gospels and so, if Jesus taught it, His followers would uphold it. It must have been taught by someone at some stage.

It is the teaching of God in the Old Testament which indicates Jesus has a relationship with God which, at the very least, resulted in His upholding the teachings of God.

The issue here is that human nature, being what it is, would not have written such moral laws. Take the days in which we live. We do not speak out about adultery or people living together as man and wife when they are not married. Over 75% today accept homosexuality. The majority of us want revenge for the wrongs done to us and we do speak ill of others. So many people are proud and stuck up and this exists among many Christians who want to make names from themselves because they are proud. There are hypocrites both in the churches and among Christians who do not practice the teachings of Christ and cause trouble. There have been major epidemics of hypocrisy such as the cruel inquisitions by the Roman Catholic Church; the so-called Holy Crusades to deliver Jerusalem from the infidels and the Crusaders were not holy at all. Burning people at the stake because their beliefs did not correspond with others were certainly not holy acts, but murder.

Even in New Testament times there were hypocrites. They exist today.

But what gives further credence to the New Testament is that Christians are not portrayed as perfect people. Diotrephes wanted to be prominent as he was a very proud man and proud people always cause dissension and pride is forbidden in the Didache as well as the Gospels. I would not say that the original disciples were hypocrites but they, like the rest of us, had faults. Judas Iscariot was a traitor, Peter denied the Lord, Thomas was a doubter and so on.

The modern world expects Christians to be perfect and, because they are not, they regard Christians as fakes and the Jesus that they follow to be fake as well. We are all human and none of us is perfect. There are politicians, lawyers, doctors, nurses, insurance companies, local authorities, police officers, social workers, banks and people in every walk of life that are imperfect and some may be downright crooked.

As we have said, human nature, being what it is, leads us to say that if man had invented God, as Marx and Nietzsche claim, then God would not have been so strict and restrictive. If, for example, we were to invent God today, He would be a soft touch. He would allow illicit sex and agree that our bodies are our own to do with as we like. He would allow homosexuality and lesbianism and adopt the principle that love is the most important factor and what you do in your own home is acceptable. He would acquiesce to revenge since the slogan of the 21st century is, Don't get mad, get even. He would allow everyone to live their own lives as they wished and grant everyone eternal life.

That is not as remote and far-fetched as it may first appear. Some Anglicans and Methodists acknowledge homosexuality as acceptable not only in their eyes but in the eyes of God. Many congregations accept that men and women living together who are not married to each other as acceptable in their eyes and in God's eyes. In many pulpits and Christian meetings today speakers get up and talk about themselves. We don't have sermons but sessions of This is My Life. The New Testament instruction is that we are 'not' to preach ourselves but Christ and Him crucified.

It is interesting to note that when church services were televised every preacher spoke about themselves in various degrees.

As we have shown, the early Christians were peaceable people. They were not militant or political. They were not a threat to the Roman empire or any other kingdom. They were not warlike or extremists. And yet the Jews and the Romans hated Christians and put them to death. Why?

Christianity preached morality and the good things the better outlook on life so that the Romans and the Jews were jealous. The Romans waged war and fought bloody battles for the extension of their empire. Christians did not. The Jews believed that fellow Jews who were converted to Christianity were traitors and hated them as a result.

And we quote the Didache:

You will not hate any person but some you will reprove. Do not become angry for anger is the path that can lead to murder. To be envious, hot-headed or contentious is where murder and strife comes from.

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